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Pulpit Preaching

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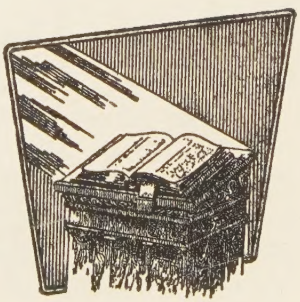

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The single theme for the sermons in this issue is "Life Made Radiant Through Christ." We do not customarily include non-homiletical materials. This month, however, we are pleased to include an article on the preaching manner and content of George Whitefield by Dr. Leslie Conrad, Jr., executive secretary of the Luther League of America.

Next month's themes will be "Every Christian an Evangelist" and "The Hand of God."

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

The Greatest Sermons of George H. Morrison contains forty sermons which are rich in variety of theme and illustrative of the kind of preaching which has made the Scottish pulpit both eloquent and influential. The passing of time has not made the mind of Morrison less relevant nor his Biblical exegesis less forceful. For many a pastor this volume will be one of the most rewarding reading experiences of the year. (Harper & Brothers, 256 pp., $3.50)

The Parables by Gerald Kennedy includes twenty-four sermons representing Kennedy's genius for identifying Biblical truth with daily experience and robed in a communicative language which is both keen and vivid. Many of the illustrations are drawn from a wide personal experience. It may not seem too impertinent to suggest that what these sermons may lack in terms of an exposition of the parables they more than

(Continued on page 25)

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey
The Federated Churches
Lewiston, Idaho

The difference between a big congregation and a small one is — you.

The difference between a church that stands before the community as a strong and vigorous church, and exerts upon the community a strong and vital influence and a church which has but little influence is — you.

The difference between a Protestantism that uses its freedom for God and a Protestantism which uses freedom to commit suicide is — you.

I do not know which side you are on in these matters. You will know. You are on one side or the other. And what you do counts heavily for or against the church — your church.

Richard H. Bennett

* * *

We have not truly borne a cross when we have simply endured it, but only when we have taken it and have changed it from a burden into a victory.

G. Pitt Beers

* * *

Experience is a good teacher, but a hard one. She gives the test first and the lesson afterward.

Changing Times

* * *

The seminary professor was advising his students about preaching. "Be sure of what you say," he counseled earnestly: "Someone may be listening."

Zion's Herald

(Continued on page 31)

Pulpit Preaching

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LIFE MADE RADIANT THROUGH CHRIST

WHAT JESUS CHRIST CAN MEAN TO YOU

Everett W. Palmer, First Methodist Church, Glendale, California

What does Jesus Christ mean to you?

For many He is but a name evoking aversion, embarrassment, or merely a yawn. They associate Him with things unattractive, uninteresting, unpleasant, even repulsive. At best they identify Him with matters irrelevant, dull, and boring.

For some He merely is a convenience for profanity, an easy cliche for a lazy and vulgar mind. They speak of Him only in the service of rancour and obscenity.

For others He is only a symbol for easy respectability or an excuse for retreat into unworthy sentimentality.

But there are those who have found Him to be the deep and singing answer to every noble hunger of the heart, the unfailing light for every worthy journey of the mind, even very Life. He is their key to the mystery of existence, their window toward the heart of God, their purpose for being alive, their deliverance from the worst, their empowerment for the best, their treasure unspeakable, their joy supreme. For them He is "the way, the truth, and the Life." For them He is Lord and Saviour.

These are they who have discovered what our Lord meant when first He announced the purpose for His lifework. At the outset of His ministry He returned to His hometown and on the Sabbath went to the synagogue to worship, as was His custom. There amid relatives and fellow townsmen who had known Him all His life He laid bare His heart and told what He believed was His mission on earth.

He turned to the writings of Isaiah where the Messiah to be expected is described as a suffering Servant and read:

> The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
> Because the Lord has anointed me
> To bring good tidings to the afflicted;
> He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
> To proclaim liberty to the captives,
> And the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

Then He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant, and said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." That was His way of saying, "I am the long-awaited Messiah sent in the mercy of God for your comfort and deliverance, for your salvation. I am come to be the friend and champion of all the friendless and oppressed. I am sent to be the means of God's mercy and comfort for all the afflicted and broken-hearted. I am charged to bring God's deliverance to all who are captive, whether in flesh or spirit."

From that day until the hard hands of Roman soldiers nailed Him on a cross, Jesus Christ never deviated from that purpose. Indeed, He widened, heightened, and deepened it beyond all previous comprehension.

Since that brutal day at Golgotha to this distant place and moment, He has continued to serve that purpose with ever-increasing power. What evil men thought would make an end

of Jesus Christ merely served to uplift Him above all time, release Him for all men and all ages to come.

What does Jesus Christ mean to you? Better, consider what He has said He can mean to you.

I

First, He would be our means of greatest comfort.

Life brings days of stinging pain and utter desolation. We know times when it seems the sky has caved in on us. On occasion life wounds us so deeply nothing of man can heal us. It seems even God has forsaken us.

In such a time Jesus Christ gives the comfort that binds up the brokenhearted. When sorrow blinds our eyes to God, in Him we see again the face of God's love. When trouble leaves us desolate, in Him we find again the hands of God's tender mercy and gentle strength. When tragedy has smashed every fond hope into ugly ruins and we wish for death, He lifts us to our feet and gives us reason to live again, even to sing again. He is the Great Physician.

Recently a news item told of a roadside billboard in northwestern Vermont. The sign carries this verse from the writings of Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Below the inscription has been painted a rural scene showing a country road leading to a white, steepled church.

The sign, the paper reported, was erected by a Mr. and Mrs. Fred Riley, whose fourteen-year old son had been drowned near their home five years ago. We put up the sign, said Mrs. Riley, in hopes that others could find help even as we have been helped.

This is the truth told by the long beloved and poignantly beautiful hymn by Thomas Moore:

Come, ye d i s c o n s o l a t e,
where'er ye languish,
Come to the m e r c y seat,
fervently kneel;
Here bring your w o u n d e d
hearts, here tell your anguish:
Earth has no s o r r o w that
heaven cannot heal.

Once Jesus Christ walked the quiet country roads and crowded city streets of a little land long ago and faraway. There He came upon people for whom life had become too terrible for telling: two blind beggars in rags and despair crouched by the road under a blistering sun; a rich ruler whose wealth and power became ashes as he watched his little girl die; the woman taken in adultery quivering in a pathetic heap at His feet, within seconds of d e a t h by stoning. To each and to all of many like them He was the face of God's love, hands of God's mercy, bringer of comfort which the w o r l d can neither give nor take away, reason for living again, even for singing again.

As Jesus Christ once ministered in compassion to men, still He ministers. This is what He can mean to you.

II

Second, He would be not only our Comforter, but our Liberator. I am come, He said, "to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

Then and now the worst bondage is that which we impose upon ourselves; chains fashioned of our own thoughts and deeds; dungeons made from the hard and bitter stones of our evil. But whatever the serfdom of our soul, and no matter how strong the chains of our captivity or how thick the walls of our dungeon, He can set us free. He has been, He is, the Great Emancipator.

There is the captivity of aimless living. A friend of mine has told of this experience by a navy officer. As his ship approached the California coast the radar screen indicated the nearness of an unidentified ship. Immediately by radio they requested the unseen ship for identification and for its course and speed. This was the reply: "No course, no speed—pleasure cruise." What may be acceptable for the life of a yacht soon

becomes for the life of a man the captivity of boredom.

For all who are wasting away in the captivity of aimless existence, Jesus Christ is the Great Emancipator. He provides purpose that commands our best. He requires obedience that sets us free.

"Freedom," someone has said, "is the by-product of a great obedience." We have the freedom of democracy only in so far as we obey. We have the freedom of health only in so far as we obey. We have the freedom to fly only in so far as we obey. We have freedom for our inner being, our heart, soul, and mind only in so far as we obey. Jesus Christ is the Master worthy our obedience. In His service is perfect freedom. His is the bondage that liberates to the uttermost. All the generations of now twenty centuries are joined by a jubilant throng in Heaven and on earth who say, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed."

Also, there is the dungeon of our own evildoing. Everyone is tempted constantly to imagine that moral law is repressive, a hinderance to happiness, a curb upon freedom. We are inclined to suppose that if only we could amend or remove certain moral laws to suit our fancy of the moment, then we would enjoy life; that if only we could take down some fence of moral requirement and go frolicking forth in a forbidden pasture, then life would be wonderful. Of all stupidity, what is worse?

The other day the papers showed a man in great despair. He was sitting, shoulders s l u m p e d, face in hands, a picture of desolation. During the past five years he had persuaded two different women to become his wife without arranging to be unmarried from either one or the other. Shortly after his second marriage he found the responsibilities of matrimony irksome and embarked for destinations unknown. He believed certain moral laws cramped his style. He would take down a fence and frolic in new pastures where grass looked greener. But alack and alas, his two wives were introduced to each other. Next, the recent cold wave in Florida made him hanker for the balmy winter sunshine of his old hometown, Long Beach, California. When he arrived, lo, there was a welcoming committee! His violation of moral law provided, not a fresh green pasture for frolicking, but dungeons of several varieties. So it is for any of us when we take down a fence of moral law.

Tennessee Williams, as few modern playwrights, is praised by the critics for his raw emotional power; his probing and merciless portrayal of human nature, especially at its worst; his crisp and ruthless accuracy. But judging from two of his masterpieces, "A Streetcar Named Desire" and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," he deserves an additional award. What contemporary playwright surpasses his ability to disclose the dark and loathsome dungeons our sins can make?

It is Jesus Christ who can set us free. In His pure life we see the image of what we are meant to be. Through His holy love we are awakened by remorse and penitence. By His continuing presence we are empowered for righteousness, all that makes life full and free, a singing splendor.

Everywhere our Lord found people in bondage, wasting away in chains, rotting in dungeons. Even worst, was the bondage they inflicted upon themselves: chains fashioned of their own thoughts and deeds; captivity imposed by aimless living; dungeons made from the adamantine granite of their own evil. And wherever He went He broke off the fetters from hands and hearts; He battered open dungeon doors; He set the captives free.

T h r o u g h all the ages since wherever He has been given the decency of a h e a r i n g and been answered with the courage of obedience He has been the Great Emanci-

pator. This is what He can mean to you.

What does Jesus Christ mean to you? Better, what will you let Him mean to you, beginning now?

He lived on earth a long time ago and far away. But time cannot bury Him. Distance cannot remove Him. Nobody can escape Him. He is among us with saving power. He is sent of God to be our Comforter and our Liberator.

THE MIND OF CHRIST

John W. Meister, First Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana

"God is not far from each one of us." Acts 17:27.

St. Paul once said, "Have this mind in you which you have in Christ Jesus our Lord." This sentence expresses our desire to have within us —and among us—the mind of Christ. If we can obtain that inner reality, then we shall possess what amounts to a spiritual gyroscope which will enable us to resist the forces of life which toss us about and tempt us to leave our appointed course.

When I think of the mind of Christ I think primarily of supreme God-consciousness. It seems to me tbat our Lord, more than any other person, was aware of God—his reality, his nearness, his companionship.

The rest of us mortals are aware of God at certain times and on certain occasions. In moments of extreme joy or sorrow, of unusual pain or pleasure, of tremendous decisions or temptations we are prompted to praise or petition him. During the ordinary round of life's experiences, however, we are far more aware of ourselves than we are of God. Our mind is rather thoroughly occupied with thoughts of how "I" feel, what "I" want, and what "I" should do.

In contrast with this self-consciousness which characterizes us, it seems to me that a unique God-consciousness characterized Jesus. I think of him as a boy of twelve going up into the temple with his parents and with other boys his own age for the Jewish rite which corresponds to our confirmation. Long after the other boys had left for home—indeed, after his parents had left for home – he tarried in the temple, discussing matters of faith with the priests and rabbis. When his parents returned to the temple and found him, they scolded him for giving them such a fright. But he replied, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"

The motif for his whole life was to be about his Father's business. Nothing else and no one else mattered so much to him as "doing the work of the One who sent him." He lived his life with evidences of what we might call an obsession or even a compulsion to "do his work while it is yet day." Thus we find that it was his custom to worship in the synagogue on the Sabbath day; it was his habit to pray in such a manner that his friends begged him, "Teach us to pray"; it was his method to resist temptation by calling to mind God-given insights; it was his way to deal with people as God deals with people—forgiving those who forgive and loving those who are unlovable; and it was his studied purpose to live his life in God's kingdom as a present reality. In short, he lived in constant companionship with God. When he said, "I and my Father are one," his friends believed him!

If we are to have the mind of Christ in us, therefore, we must seek to develop a more constant awareness of God. How can we find within ourselves a continuing awareness of God?

I

One or two conditions of the search

can properly be noted at the outset. One is that we are talking about the habit of a lifetime. While one sermon may encourage that habit, it cannot in and of itself produce that habit. Another condition is the recognition that we cannot be as consistently God-conscious as was Jesus of Nazareth. We can save ourselves much needless feeling of guilt and failure if we admit our status. We are not, as was Jesus, equal with God. At best, we are a little lower than God. Our assignment is to be perfect as Jesus was perfect, but our destiny is to reach that goal when we are with God face to face. Meanwhile, we are to grow into the fullness of his stature.

A third condition of the quest ought also to be noted. It is natural for us to be more aware of God at some times than at other times. The principle of rhythm—of ebb and flow, of heat and cold, of high and low—seems to be established throughout creation. It is certainly established in our spiritual lives. The greatest of saints testify that at some times God seems more real and nearer, than at other times. Even Jesus must have felt somehow nearer to God as he prayed in great sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before he died than he did during the dinner party in Simon's home or when he cried, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

II

Within the context of these conditions, however, I want to say two things which may help us to find the mind of Christ by helping us to develop a constant awareness of God. Both of these suggestions have to do with "where" we can hope to find God. And both of them can be captioned with two sentences from the Book of Acts: "God is not far from each one of us . . . In him we live and move and have our being."

One reason God seems un-real to so many of us so much of the time is that we persist in thinking of him as "out there." The first truth I want to state is that God is not "out there" but "right here."

With our mouths and minds we know—to quote our catechism—that "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable." This is an echo of our Lord's words, "God is a spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit." That being the case, God can no more be localized than the spirit of hate or love can be localized. Hate is not "out there" but everywhere, within reach of anyone who determines to be hateful. Hate in the truest sense is "right here"—ours for the asking. And so with love. Love is not "out there" but is here and everywhere—within reach of anyone. A characteristic of spirit—is that it can be recognized in human dwelling places but those dwelling places in no sense limit the spirit or localize it. The spirit itself is still abroad in the world. If anything, it is more abroad in the world precisely because it has found a dwelling place in a particular person. For example, when a person becomes hateful, we know there is somehow more—not less—of the spirit of hate in the world. And so with pride, jealousy, or any other spirit.

Jesus said, "God is spirit." Paul said, "In him we live and move and have our being." John said, "God is love"—the kind of love we see on the cross. Put these together and we realize that God is not "out there" but "right here" wherever we are. That, as Tolstoi once put it, "Wherever Love is, God is."

And we realize where we should look for God: right here where we are. To tell us to be aware of God is like telling a fish to be aware of water, or of telling a bird to be aware of air. Spiritually speaking, we are "in God."

III

Another reason God seems unreal to so many of us so much of the time is that we persist in thinking of him as "up." Heaven is "up there."

Our prayers are offered "up." Our Lord is said to have ascended "up" to be with God.

It follows quite inevitably that if God is not "out there" but "right here" he is not "up." But it helps me to conceive of the reality of God when I realize that from one point of view he is not so much "up" as he is "down." The philosophers have a way of speaking of God as the "ground of all being." The figure here is obvious: as a plant is rooted and grounded in soil, so our soul is rooted and grounded in God.

This figure helps me not only because the ground is more real to me than endless space beyond the clouds, but because it helps to make more real the way God deals with this bundle of humanity. I think, for example, of the way Leslie Weatherhead uses this concept of God's whereabouts to interpret the way intercessory prayer works. He asks us to think of two neighboring farmers, each with a water well which is sunken into the same underground pool of water. He compares the underground water supply which nourishes their souls. Now it is obvious that what affects that underground water supply affects both farmers. Suppose one of them decides to poison his neighbor's well. Then he himself will be drinking poisoned water. In something of the same way, our spirits drink of the Spirit which is God. As the prophet said, Come ye to the waters and drink. This is God. And what I send down into my deepest being—what we call psychologically our subconscious—affects the whole substratum of spiritual reality—God—the ground of being.

Here, then, are two suggestions which may help us to develop a more constant awareness of the presence of God: to remember that he is here and that we are in him as a plant is in the ground. In him we do live and move and have our being.

IV

As I indicated earlier, we are talking the habit of a lifetime. A constant awareness of God is not something we can turn on and off like water in a faucet. We can no more develop a healthy relationship with God by means of occasional prayers and sporadic attempts at living the Christian life, than we can develop a healthy body by gorging ourselves on a meal once every week or so and by sporadic but shortlived diets. And we can no more develop a continuing companionship with God by ignoring him than we can develop a friendship with a person by giving him no thought or attention.

If we truly desire this aspect of the mind of Christ within us, then we must develop some holy habits. Let our last thought at night be of God. Let our first awakening word be a word of praise to him for the new day and its opportunities. And let the whole day through be made richer by recognition that as the plant is rooted in soil, so my soul is rooted in God; and as the bird lives in the air, so my soul is nourished by God.

When we look in the right place we find God. And we find him here: For in him we do live and move and have our being.

EVERY LIFE IS TOUCHED BY CHRIST

Gene E. Bartlett, First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California

In the New Testament record, we are told of a day when two very discouraged men were walking home to the village of Emmaus after the crucifixion. A stranger fell into step with them. They told him of their discouragement. This Jesus, whom they had followed, had come to defeat and death. The stranger tried to show them how it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer. But the turning of the story comes, of course, when,

having arrived at home, they invited him to share their simple meal. And the tradition has it that when he broke the bread they recognized him as the living Christ. The story has a simple but revealing disclosure, "And their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

It wasn't his presence that was needed, you see. It was already there. It was their recognition.

I

First, there is such a moment of disclosure when we see the r e a l significance of the influences which have shaped our lives. When maturity has come we all see these influences in new perspective and with new meaning.

What made your life what it is, with sufficient strength for the day's work? How did you come to know what love is, and where did you gain the understanding that makes you want to know more? Is this accident or is it the hand of God fashioning with the tools of everyday experience?

Many of you have shared in our discipline groups. A few years ago we wondered how to start on that first evening when we came together in small groups. We suggested that the opportunity be given to each person to give a thumbnail biography of his spiritual life. Each was invited to take a moment to tell of the persons who had influenced him most, or to share some experience which he felt to be decisive. We thought this would take a few moments and serve as introduction around the circle. The fact is, it took most of our first evening together. As each told about the lives which had touched his, or the experience that proved decisive, there came to almost every group moments of recognition. We saw the evidence of Providence. Recalling these experiences, we found the love of God becoming very real. We came to see that while it may have been other lives who were the point of contacts, they were being used by Another, One who held all our lives in His hands. Like the men at Emmaus, our eyes are opened, and we recognize him.

II

There is a second point of recognition. It is that moment when we know the hunger to be useful.

Strange how an ordinary thing will set your thought going! It happened to me one evening recently when coming out of the church late at night I saw a layman go to his car to go home. Certainly nothing very dramatic about that! But it set me to wondering, Why does a man do it? He isn't being paid. Often there is not much honor about it. It does cut into a man's leisure hours and often at a time when he needs some leisure. Yet, year in and year out, able and faithful men and women give service to their church. I think I know one reason. There is something deeply rooted in everyone of us—the hunger to be useful. Given the choice, not many of us would want to have our lives add up to a minus or even to a zero. So, in life after life, Christ touches that side of us and sets something growing.

There is a story which tells of a man who had lived through the days of depression in England, increasingly restless and even bitter as he found door after door closed to him. Then the war came, and in a matter of weeks everyone was needed. One day in a public meeting, unable to contain himself, he stood and said, "At last my country needs me. But God forgive us, it is to kill." In the Kingdom enterprise every man is needed for life, for the keeping of life, for the fulfilling of life, and for the using of it. When that hunger comes in you, it can be an Emmaus hour when the word could be brought home, "And their eyes were opened and they recognized him."

III

There is one more i m p o r t a n t moment when Christ draws near. It is that time when we have found strength in the midst of suffering. In

many ways the Bible assures us it will be so, for that is God's way with men. But when some dark struggle comes and you find yourself strangely strengthened, you stand very near a first-hand experience of God. Many a man has found the everlasting arms in passing through deep waters.

One of our most courageous missionaries has related such a time in China in the days when the Communist forces were on the move. A doctor in one of our hospitals, he discovered that words he had been saying all his life became as fresh as though they were heard for the first time. They went to bed at night not knowing whether there would be a knock at the door before morning had come. They began their rounds in the hospital never sure whether they would be completed before the sounds of invasion broke in. Day by day they lived in that uncertainty. As he walked about the hospital and carried on his work, words from the Psalms kept coming to his mind, unbidden but very welcome: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil," and 'The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? . . . though wars should rise against me, in this will I be confident." Many a time in some church service the words had been spoken or heard with only a half heart. But this time it was different. For in the course of human affairs they had come back to the very kind of situation in which such words first were born. They had freshness because they had returned to the original setting. And out of such words, like the water from an artesian well, there came refreshment and daily strength.

Who could forget a time like that? Who could doubt that it is one of those hours when the great encounter with God has come, as He promised. But now he waits for our recognition. That's one of the most wonderful experiences in life—recognition. It's the moment when a child smiles back for the first time at his parents. It's the light that breaks on the face of one who sees in a crowd someone for whom he is watching. It's the wonder in a couple who discover that the feeling between them is enduring and real. It's the moment when someone who has passed through crisis recognizes the loved ones around him. Recognition!

But the great hour is the moment when Christ, who has been so near all the time, is known at last by those he has blessed. To know him, to accept him, and to follow is to enter at last into the full experience of life abundant.

THE KINGDOM IS NEAR US

Charles F. Jacobs, First Congregational Church, Waterloo, Iowa

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3.

Some of you will recall George Brush, the odd character in Thornton Wilder's novel, "Heaven's My Destination." George, a textbook salesman who wanted to reform the world, had a summary way of stating his religious philosophy:

George Brush is my name;
America's my nation;
Ludington's my dwelling place,
And Heaven's my destination.

This focalizes the thinking of many of our generation. Most of us were probably brought up on the idea that the most important concern of religion was heaven and hell, and our preoccupation was with getting into one and staying out of the other. Heaven, we believed, was a literal city on a star swung somewhere among the vast immensities of space. The old theologians insisted that life on this fanciful Shangri-La was one of perpetual joy and endless day. There would be no tears, no struggle, no grief, for death would not exist.

This heavenly city was a place to be squeezed into or left out. Heaven was our destination but our chances of getting in were none too good. "Enter ye in by the narrow gate," said Jesus, "for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it." The evangelists used to threaten us with the unquenchable fire, yes, take us by the nape of the neck and hold us over the furnaces of hell until, in imagination, we could s m e l l the sulphurous fumes rising therefrom. It was all so vivid and so real! We were never allowed to forget "the weeping and the wailing and the gnashing of teeth" of those who had been cast into outer darkness. As long as I live I will never be able to forget Dante's lurid picture of the Devil stoking the furnaces of hell with the parched bodies of the damned.

Now I want to do what I can to correct this distorted picture of a major concern of religion. I am not saying this morning that hell is not a reality. I have seen people caught in its grip. And the possibility of hell in this atomic age exceeds the wildest imaginings of the old theologians. That there is hell right here and now, there can be no possible doubt. Heaven and hell lie all around us. Sometimes heaven comes to us as the reward for our own striving, and sometime it is simply the gift of God. Sometimes we create our own hell by insisting on trying all the wrong ways first; but often we have to endure hell because of conditions that are beyond our control. There is an immutable law to the effect that what a man sows that he must harvest. "No man can play hell all his life", says one doctor, "and hope to be in heaven in his old age." The old idea of hell as a literal lake of fire had, I suppose, a certain practical value. No doubt men have turned back from evil through fear of the dreaded punishment. It is the idea which finds expression in our punitive penal system. We hope that through fitting the punishment to the crime to deter men from evil ways. But it can be shown, I believe, that the greatest spur to righteousness is not fear but love. It was love of knowledge that made Einstein the creator of a new world. The really great artists have painted pictures for the love of art; the immortal writers have written for the love of their work. Saints have led saintly lives, not because they feared future punishment, but for the love of life, for the love of saintliness.

But this is not a discourse on hell. However, this statement has been essential as a background for what I want to say to you concerning the kingdom of heaven—the highest aim and purpose of the race. Jesus had much to say about the kingdom. In his very first word to the people on the mountainside—"blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"—he was instructing people concerning entrance into the kingdom. This kingdom was his chief concern; he talked about it in beatitudes, in epigrams, in narrative stories, and in parables. The Beatitudes were the laws by which the kingdom was to be governed.

What did Jesus have to say about the kingdom? Where is it? How may it be obtained? What will it be like?

I

It will be helpful if we clear away some popular misconceptions of the kingdom.

For one thing, in light of our knowledge about Christ and our world, we may be certain that heaven is not a place among the stars to which only particular people go when they die. No one of us can understand all the unfathomable riches of the kingdom of heaven, yet we know in part. Where heaven is, I cannot say with finality. I am quite sure that it is not astronomical. This much I do know—heaven is all about us and

the real tragedy is that so often we do not enjoy it for we look for it in the wrong place. Jesus simply said "the kingdom of God is within you." I have my fancies. Sometimes I think heaven was back in the folds of the Missouri hills where I grew up as a boy, surrounded by the love and care of devoted parents, the help of brothers and sisters, and the companionship of a faithful dog. If only the evangelists, instead of frightening me so much with the fear of hell, had shown me that the ground on which I stood was heavenly g r o u n d my childhood might have been even more abundant. The vice of the old time religion was that it taught us that we "were strangers here on a strange land," when it ought to have helped us to be at home with God in his mysterious and glorious world.

A further idea which needs to be corrected is that the kingdom of heaven is to come at the end of an age. The popular idea of the Jews at the time of Jesus was that human history was rushing to a conclusion, and that this conclusion would come when God intervened to destroy the present order and to establish his kingdom. Jesus was a child of his generation and his speech reflects this fervent Jewish view. Yet it is not the major emphasis in his message. It does not dominate his thinking. Jesus believed that history was in God's hand; that even now the kingdom was coming in the hearts of men as they sought God's will and purpose for their lives. His major emphasis was not upon "the Coming Day of the Lord," but upon how men ought to live now in relationship to God and to one another.

One other misconception must be faced. The church is not to be equated with the kingdom of heaven, nor is the kingdom of heaven coterminous with the c h u r c h . The boundaries of the kingdom extend far beyond the church; there are multitudes in the church who have never tasted of the kingdom, and there are many in the kingdom who are not in the church. The kingdom is a figurative, spiritual conception of the presence of God in the hearts of men and women, the reign of God on earth. Wherever devotion to truth, to beauty and to goodness are to be found, there is the k i n g d o m of heaven.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not arguing against the church. But I do deplore the effort to make the church an end rather than a means to the kingdom. It remains the greatest instrument in the world for the cultivation of the qualities of human life that belong to the kingdom. But it is only an instrument and we must never make it the end. With this in mind we can sing

> I love thy kingdom, Lord, the house of thine abode,
> The church our blest Redeemer saved, with his own precious blood.

II

Let us take a look at what Jesus did say about the kingdom of heaven. For one thing, he said that, the kingdom is near us. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That is not a postponed beatitude; it is capable of immediate realization. Dr. Goodspeed tells us that Jesus did not, like the prophets before him, foretell the kingdom. He did not predict its coming. He stepped into the human situation and started it. He inaugurated the kingdom. He offered the kingdom to his hearers. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," said he, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And the emphasis was upon the Now. Heaven was not a guerdon to be conferred at a f u t u r e date, but whosoever would follow him could be in the kingdom now. The kingdom of God was something that could be entered into now and personally realized.

Jesus' teachings are not directed to those who "have gone to heaven," nor are they to be applied at some

distant end of the age. They are beamed to people who desire now to enter into relationship with God. The focus of his teachings is upon what men must do now if they desire eternal life in the present. The cup of cold water, the second mile, the lost sheep, the Good Samaritan, are relevant to the present world. Those who practice these precepts can be with him in Paradise. He put his message into the familiar time schedule: "Today—if you will hear his voice." He rescued the kingdom of heaven from future fatalism and advocated that men do something about it. God's abundant love was waiting for men who would accept it and incorporate it into their daily lives. Now was the acceptable time to do something about it. Professor Colwell reminds us that there was in his teaching a city set on a hill. "The stones for its walls were carried or dragged up the steep slopes of that hill in this age—not in the kingdom to come." Love your enemies, pray for those who persecute, turn the other cheek, are things that men can do in this age.

We may be sure that Jesus would concur in the topic: the kingdom is near us. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"—not in some distance day, but now. Walter Rauschenbusch speaks as one who had found the kingdom:

> In the castle of my soul
> Is a little postern gate,
> Whereat, when I enter,
> I am in the presence of God.
> In a moment, in the turning of
> a thought,
> I am where God is.
> This is a fact.

Today I emphasize a further thing that Jesus had to say about the reign of God on earth. This kingdom is not something intended for isolated individuals or for an elect coterie. It was for anyone who would enter into it and live as though it was a present reality. The reign of God was for the "people of the land" who, in his day, were outside the Law and were doomed by Judaism. Even the despised Samaritan could be in the kingdom of heaven if he entered into a close relationship with God. One thing stands out in the New Testament—the kingdom is not only near us but it is open to the whole Noah's ark of the human race. The boundaries of the reign of God are as wide as the wide wide world. The undergirding philosophy of Jesus' ministry is summed up in the saying that God has made of one blood all people to dwell together in peace on the earth. Let no one, in this age of earth satellites and adventure into outerspace, say that this is an impractical gospel. The modern world is coming to realize that it is sheer realism; that nothing else is practical in this age. It is an essential requirement for survival in the twentieth century.

This gospel of universality did not always fall on welcome ears. There were men of power who hated and feared Jesus for his teachings. The end of the strife is not yet in sight. We may continue to bury our dead in segregated cemeteries and establish iron curtains to divide the races, but the threat of modern war underlines the futility of our rage. "Something there is that doesn't love a wall," says the poet. That something is God. When the reign of God comes to us individually and to our society the walls disappear. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The only requirement for citizenship in God's kingdom is the doing of God's will.

Again, Jesus taught that if we wanted to enter the kingdom of God we must become as little children. He was not looking for the reign of God in some distant place. He was seeing the kingdom of heaven in commonplace things—in little children. This familiar teaching arose when, confronted by a group of quarrelsome

old men, and finding himself unable to make his position clear to them in words, Jesus placed a child in their presence and said, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." The "poor in spirit," says Jesus, are those who retain the spirit of little children.

Now what are the characteristics of little children? One observation towers over all others — the child's absolute dependence upon his parents. The newborn baby could exist for only a short period without help from adults. He is totally dependent for food, for drink, for clothing, for warmth and love, for life itself upon his parents. We never outgrow that state of dependence. When the child becomes a man he has acquired enough skills to have a measure of independence, but in all the final issues of life he is forever dependent upon a power not his own. We have taken the first step into God's kingdom when we acknowledge our dependence upon our Heavenly Father. Moreover, the child is characterized by curiosity, by the spirit of adventure. He does not make compromises. His honesty often shocks us. He wears no armor of righteousness, does not ask wherewithal he shall be clothed and fed. He never doubts the protecting hand of his mother or father.

III

Let us go on now to the conclusion of this message. The power of the kingdom is the power of God at work in the world. This power is available for those who will crowd through a narrow gate to find it. Our minds have been so long darkened by literal lakes of fire and pictures of a heavenly city among the stars that we cannot see the God who is near us and ready to share with us.

Someone asks: How can you believe in a reign of God on earth? My answer is that it is the only kind of kingdom that Jesus talked about. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," he said, "and if any man will take up the cross and come after me," he can be with me in Paradise. No kingdom is coming in power from the clouds. Why should we be afraid to discard a vain hope? God has not left himself without a witness in the world. We not only have available to us the power that was in Jesus, but we have the power on which he depended—the power of God.

The Parable of the Sower is one of the noblest of the parables. Once we believed that Jesus was trying to tell his hearers that the reign of God would grow as a grain of mustard seed. It is a truer interpretation, I believe, to say that Jesus was not talking about the growth of the mustard seed, but the soil from whence it came. The power of God is the power of the soil. It is God who gives the growth. Men have borne testimony to this power in many ways. In his poem, "West Running Brook," Robert Frost speaks of the stream of everything that runs away. Yet he calls our attention to the fact that there is something in the stream that resists this running away, a sort of throwing back. He concludes with the observation, "There is something sending up the sun." That something is the power of God. Jesus took this power that bound him. He called it God. He loved it. He trusted it. He talked to it as a child talks with his earthly parent. And this power ceased to be a blind force and became the spirit of a loving Father. Even on Calvary the love of God did not abandon him. He could never drift beyond the love and care of his Heavenly Father. To the penitent thief on the cross, he said, "This day you shall be with me in Paradise."

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The reign of God in our heart is God's gift to us. It is not a postponed gift, but even now we may possess it. It

is the treasure beyond all other treasures, the pearl of great price. And it is God's good pleasure to give us his kingdom. All that we need to do, says Jesus, is to grab it as a little child grabs a gift.

WHEN JESUS COMES

Homer J. R. Elford, Trinity Methodist Church, Youngstown, Ohio

On a recent "Person to Person" program Charles Collingwood gave us the opportunity to meet Carlos Levi. By means of the magic of television we were permitted to walk along the garden paths of Mr. Levi's home and look with him out over the city of Rome. Going into his house we saw some of his paintings in which he has tried to portray some of the characters of his books. Carlos Levi is best known for his captivating biographical novel, titled "Christ Stopped at Eboli." Because Mr. Levi dared to speak out against Mussolini's war on Ethiopia, he was for many years an exile in a little village in southern Italy, Gagliano. In his book he takes us to this small town which he describes as:

> "A world hedged in by custom and sorrow, cut off from history and the State, eternally patient . . . a land without comfort or solace, where the peasant lives out his motionless civilization on barren ground in remote poverty, and in the presence of death."

It is a town so remote that, as the peasants and the run-down gentry who exist there said, even Christ had not found it.

> "We are not Christians. Christ stopped short of here, at Eboli, some miles down the valley, where the narrow, white highway turns inland from Salerno into the hills."

As Carlos Levi lives with these people for a year during his exile, he comes to see what they mean. He finds that the seasons pass today over the toil of the peasants just as they did three thousand years before Christ. No message—human or divine—has reached them. He comments:

> "It is a shadowy land which knows neither sin nor redemption from sin. Christ did not come to Gagliano; He stopped at Eboli."

I

Gagliano becomes for us a symbol of ever so many places throughout life where Christ has not come; the places where individuals and whole groups live out their lives apart from the radiance and meaning which Christ alone can give and make real. Wherever and whenever human values are flaunted; when material things are considered more sacred than spiritual values; whenever God is denied—either by word or in deed—there we see a living example of what life is like when Christ is left out.

But there is a positive side to this whole matter. While Carlos Levi does not favor us with a glimpse of the city of Eboli, the place where Christ is said to have stopped, we are not without illustrations of what has happened in those places all over the world when our Lord has had a chance at human lives.

We know, for example, that it was because Jesus had made such a great transformation in their lives that immediately following the resurrection people took it upon themselves to fulfill His command to "go into all the world" with the good news of a Way, a Truth and a Life which was to change the course of history. From those humble beginnings has spread a dynamic movement which has had its creative effect upon people of every race and nation. The influence of Christ upon our present-day civilization and culture is obvious. Every worth-while institution for human

betterment, such as schools for broadening the horizons of the mind, and hospitals for preserving and salvaging the body, as well as strictly character-building institutions, send down roots into the soil which is nurtured by Christian influence. Even after many of these institutions succeed in gaining their support from sources other than the Church, they depend for their very life upon the dedication of people to this ideal of prompting the values which Jesus made real to mankind.

II

Today people who have gotten really serious about their commitment to Christ know that they share His life only when they share in His concern for seeing to it that all people, everywhere, come to know and live His quality of life abundant. The word which we give to this creative concern is "missions." And at our best we realize missions or missionary work is part and parcel of the purpose of the Body of Christ which we call the Church. This means, very plainly and simply, that what we do in and for the local congregation is part of the mission of the Church and what we do at the farthest outpost of a remote island is likewise a part of our mission.

Elementary as that may seem to some, apparently it has never been accepted as a real challenge by a large part of the company of people who comprise the Church. It is on that account that many churches today consider the socalled missionary or benevolence c h a l l e n g e as an integral part of their total church budget. They know that Christian people dare not measure their responsibility of stewardship simply in terms of what is deemed necessary to make possible a program for themselves and their own families and friends; a program of inspiring worship services, stimulating Christian education and fellowship. Whenever they stop short of such a provincial concept they are confronted with the question of Jesus: "If you love them which love you, what reward have you . . . what do you more than others?"

They know that Christ challenges us to go out and seek the lost, to preach deliverance, to heal the sick. It is for this reason that we take it upon ourselves to see to it that Christ gets to the desolate Gaglianos of the world—the places where people live in a shadowy land which is not aware of the quality of life which Christ wants us all to have. This program of Christ reaches into human lives to transform them into beings of divine worth; it drives out the forces of evil; it makes the wounded whole. That is what happens when Jesus comes into life and He is depending upon all who hail Him as the Risen Lord of all of life to make it possible for Him to work His miracles of redemption.

THE HIGH COST OF CHRISTIANITY

Wesley P. Ford, Central Christian Church, Pasadena, California

There is a passage in S e c o n d Samuel which speaks from the page and says to the reader, "Wait here." The Israelites were at war. David was hiding in a cave while the Philistines were garrisoned at nearby Bethlehem. David longingly said, "O that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem." Hearing the king's plea, three men b r o k e through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well, and brought it. David was so overcome that he refused to drink. He poured out the water as an offering to the Lord saying, "Shall I drink the blood of the men who went at the risk of their lives?" When the water was

obtained at such a price, David chose to remain thirsty and make the water an offering.

I

The cost of our heritage is great. To see it wholly is to stand with bowed heads. Jesus said that if you would build a tower first count the cost. Let us consider the cost of the tower which has been built and which we already occupy.

Always the cost has been high for expressing the convictions which have created our faith. More than 700 years before Christ, Amos called men to live justly: "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream." Amaziah said to Amos, "Go, flee away to the land of Judah." A hundred years later Jeremiah called his countrymen to heed the righteousness of God. "And the princes were enraged at Jeremiah, they beat him and imprisoned him." Six-hundred years later Jesus bid men seek the Kingdom of God. That they might understand the way of God, he went about doing good. And the multitude shouted, "Crucify him!"

Soon the spirit of the crucified Christ possessed others who knew now that he had spoken the truth. They would exhalt his name. But their loyalty to the truth he proclaimed became the measure of their suffering. Stephen declared that Jesus was the r i g h t e o u s one and men crushed him to death with stones. The c r u s a d e progressed and the record says, "Herod the king laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He k i l l e d James; and . . . arrested Peter."

As followers would not be silenced, violence mounted. The oil soaked bodies of Christians became human torches for heathen banquets. The early Christians were thrown to wild beasts to be torn and mutilated while others watched for sport. Will we who live in the tower stop to count its cost?

II

Come now across a few centuries. The record had been preserved in old language and common folk were left in ignorance. In 1382 John Wyclif translated the New Testament from Latin into English. The hand written copies were precious and men paid dearly for the privilege of reading. But rulers did not want common men to know the truth and soon a law was passed that "any person found reading the scripture in English would forfeit his land, his life and his goods." Death for reading the New Testament! But still, embodied in brave men, truth marched. In 1525 William Tyndale made a new translation and now it could be printed. For making the New Testament readable Tyndale was strangled and burned to death on October 6, 1536. The high cost of Christianity!

In 1549 the Christian faith was taken to Japan by Portugese Jesuits under the leadership of F r a n c i s Xavier. It first met strong opposition. Then it took hold and spread rapidly. But in less than a hundred years rulers discovered that men who possessed this faith could not be possessed. So they set about to rid the land of the new faith. Persecutions were again as violent as those of the first century. All the ingenuities of oriental t o r t u r e were employed. Christians were crucified, decapitated, and thrown into pits. In 1638 the Christians in one district were offered their freedom if they would renounce their faith. They preferred to die and were killed to the last man—36,000 of them. All Christians in Japan suffered and the proportion who lost their lives for their faith is probably unequaled elsewhere in Christian history.

Bitter persecutions are a part of the cost of Christianity, but they have not prevented its march. When geographic expansion was blocked, this faith went deeper and rose with greater strength. The next chapter in Japan's life was over 200 years of isolation and Christianity made a new beginning in 1859. Now Christians

are a small minority in that populous country, but their influence is far ahead of Christianity's numerical strength.

III

No matter the cost, and for a reason that can be felt easier than it can be explained, men leave their boats, their villages, their little worlds and march in the name of Jesus Christ. What is this strange procession? How explain this voluntary death march? Is it the hand of God in history?

In 1858 John Paton left his settled pastorate in Glasgow and sailed for the New Hebrides, some said "to throw away his life among the cannibals." But a life thrown away for Christ's sake is another rung in the ladder for the next generation.

Mr. Paton tells of making a stand against wife-beating and widow-strangling. Widows were strangled because they were useless. Finally he got ten chiefs to agree not to allow these cruelties. One protested saying: "If we did not beat our women, they would never work; they would not fear and obey us; but when we have beaten, and killed, and feasted on two or three, the rest are all very quiet and good for a long time to come!" What does this strange procession mean? There, but for the grace of God, go I. Is it worthwhile? Let those answer who have felt mercy and those who know homes where love abounds.

In his autobiography John Paton makes this observation: "Slowly, yet progressively, they unlearned their heathenism; surely and hopefully they learned Christianity and civilization." This is history. Slowly we unlearn heathenism, and slowly but surely we discover the fruits of Christian civilization. But the journey has not ended and the cost continues to be high!

Just now the nations battle over the possession of the strongest bombs, fastest planes, and most powerful and accurate missiles. If, in this struggle, we forget that the battle for ideas is not yet won, we will allow the clock to be turned backward. The unanswered question for millions is "What can a man believe?" In Christ we have found an answer, but our answer will not propagate itself. It is for us who possess beliefs that matter to proclaim and to demonstrate. This is the high cost of Christianity.

IV

With modern methods the opportunity is unlimited but we falter at the cost. We fail to see that the cost is not so great as the cost of our unwillingness. Look for a moment at the journey of our faith. See Amos driven out of town, Jeremiah in prison, and Jesus on a cross. See Stephen stoned, James killed, and Peter in prison. See the lions tearing at the bodies of the Christians. See the fires ignited around William Tyndale. See the first Japanese Christians destroyed by the thousands. See John Paton daring to live a life of love among cannibals. See all of this and more. Count the cost. And then ask one question, "What if they hadn't?"

If Christian history is worthwhile, then Christian witness now is vital. When I see some living in the love and liberty of this heritage, bought at such a price, and concluding that the tithe is too much, I wonder where the church has failed. Do people who live in the tower not know its cost? If they know the cost do they care about tomorrow? In the matter of stewardship we are pygmies being carried on the backs of spirit-filled giants who knew the meaning of giving. They gave not for selfish gain but that those who live tomorrow may know the truth that sets men free.

"O that I might have a drink from the well in Bethlehem." Bethlehem was in enemy territory. Even so men risked their lives to bring water for the king. When he realized the high cost, David would not drink. "Shall I drink the blood of those who went at the risk of their lives?" At such

a high cost that water became an offering to the Lord. And what will we do, we who live in a tower whose walls are cemented with the blood of martyrs? The high cost of Christianity includes the cruel deaths of thousands who believed it was more important that you and I be rightly related to Jesus Christ than that their earthly lives be continued.

THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE

A. E. Purviance, Palm Springs Methodist Church, Hialeah,

Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.
Romans 13:10.

A few years ago I was invited into the home of a retired Methodist minister to have lunch with him and his wife. While we were dining a young mother and her six year-old son came into the home, and following introductions she excused herself and she and the lad went into one of the bedrooms. The minister said, "We have taken her in to help her get another start in life." She was young, attractive, and apparently had everything to live for.

A short time later I picked up the morning newspaper and read that she had gone to the top of a tall building and had plunged to her death through suicide. Furthermore, she had carried her small son in her arms as she jumped to the pavement below.

Such tragic things occur daily in this beloved country of ours where we have more liberty and more opportunity than in any other country on earth. Not less than 10,000 persons take their own lives annually. To us who remain it seems like the workings of a demented mind, and we say, "No one with his right senses would do such a thing as take his own life."

However, countless millions of us Americans are guilty of a crime almost as heinous as that of suicide. It is the crime of carelessness on the highways. This refers to the motorist and it refers to the pedestrian. The sacredness of life cannot be overemphasized, and we have no more right to take chances with the lives of others than we do with our own.

Therefore, let us think together of three avenues down which we may travel which will help us to do our part toward making our highways safe for motorists and pedestrians.

I

The first avenue down which we must travel is a growth in Christian love. Christ said, "Ye are the light of the world." He also said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works." One place where we have an excellent opportunity to let our light shine before men is behind the steering wheel. Whether it is on the busy streets of the city or on the open road, no one any longer drives with only his own life at stake. We are so dependent upon the skill and care of others, that lack of these q u a l i t i e s can instantaneously be the difference between life and death, safety and accident.

Therefore, no man has the right to give anything less than his best in courtesy and carefulness when he is behind the wheel. By the same token, it is the moral responsibility of every pedestrian to exercise extreme caution when walking on the streets and the highways and to obey traffic regulations, for once again more lives than his own may be at stake. In order to allow our lights to shine we must assume the responsibility and the sacred trust that become ours when we venture out upon roads and highways. As we do this we grow in Christian love.

Papini in his book, "The Life of Christ," says, "Jesus had just one aim: to transform men from beasts to saints by the means of love." If He walked the earth today, Christ would still have as His aim the transforming of men who oftentimes are beasts behind the wheel to men who consider safety on the highways a sacred trust and a moral responsibility.

To be sure, in order to do this we have to sacrifice a bit. Almost everything in life that is of outstanding worth comes only through sacrifice. We may have to sacrifice time, but again the sacredness of life far overshadows the few moments gained through reckless driving or excessive speeds. Highway slaughter would cease if every driver would consider the sacredness of human life each time he ventures forth.

Recently I read the story of a chaplain who told of getting lost one dark night during the first World War when he was driving a truck close to No Man's Land in France. At a crossroads he got out of the truck and walked over to a little shrine. He knew there would be directions carved on a small stone. When he got to the shrine he turned on his flashlight and found his directions. There were other words on the shrine that should give spiritual direction to every traveler today. They were: "Traveler, hast thou ever seen so great a grief as Mine?" Christ's grief must be vastly increased today when he sees the careless manner in which we upon the highways tend to treat the most sacred thing God has given us: our lives. We need, therefore, above all else to grow in Christian love and to assume the responsibility for the safety of all lives—those of others as well as our own. Paul tells us in our text, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

II

The second avenue down which we must travel is a growth in citizenship. A good citizen is one who obeys the laws of the land. He does not believe that he is so privileged that he can take certain liberties with the law hoping that he can "get by."

Look at the text once more against the background in which it was written. Paul was writing to the Christians in Rome whose lives were imperiled by the cruel emperor Nero. Followers of Christ at that time were being fed to the lions in the arenas, yet Paul tells them in effect that they shall be good citizens by being subject to the governing authorities. Why did he say this? Because he believed that every man, Christian or not, was subject to the laws of the state. He is saying to us today, I take it, that it isn't enough just for a Christian to keep out of jail, but he must also be a good neighbor and a good citizen as he keeps the laws governing him.

The teen-ager who with several of his buddies jumps in his rambling wreck after school and tears around a few corners to show off is not being a good citizen and he has to grow considerably before he becomes one. Showing off—or, often, covering up an inferiority complex in this fashion—not only imperils his life and those in the car with him but also all he meets on the streets, both motorists and pedestrians .

The drunk driver is another who is not a good citizen, and there is much truth in the statement that "a loose nut at the wheel is not as dangerous as a tight one." Statistics tell us that 75 per cent of the accidents in this country involve a drinking driver. And, as often as not, it is the innocent, sober person who is injured.

This week as I was returning home on one of the principal arteries of traffic a car overtook me, swung back into my lane, raced on for a block, then turned off to the right. The driver had gained a good five seconds but he had to violate the

speed limit in order to do it! Add to this the risk of an accident as I slowed down to permit him to make his turn. All of us need to grow into better citizens behind the wheel. As someone said recently, "We need to slow down a bit and let our souls catch up with our bodies." Should we do this, then driving would be a pleasure for all of us and accidents would be few indeed.

I thought recently of this: if everyone would try to be as courteous as he possibly could just for one day what marked improvements would be shown. If a smile instead of a honking horn or a sharp retort would follow some minor traffic problem in which we often find ourselves I believe it would be a contagious thing. A smile is contagious—try it and see.

A short while before his death, Dr. William Stidger, former dean of Boston Theological School, set out to write an article on following a smile all day. He wanted to see how many persons caught it. He started with a red-headed, freckled face news boy whom he saw smile at a business man who purchased a morning paper. It was "spontaneous as a sunrise." The business man smiled back and walked on, and Dr. Stidger followed. Within two squares he saw him infect ten p e r s o n s with that smile. He carried it onto a bus and infected the conductor. Later the conductor walked back through his bus and smiled a delightful smile that infected all on the bus except one. He was blind! At his elevator the business man infected eight more as he stood and waited. In a flash of a second he had passed it on to the elevator girl and then on to his receptionist at the outer desk. Dr. Stidger followed, and in a moment a smiling young woman asked if she could help him. The theologian soon was seated in the business executive's office telling the story. When he told his new friend that he had infected 150 persons he could hardly believe it.

"Would you get that news boy at noon and be at Rotary today?" he asked. It was done with the results that before the day was over a little red headed newsboy had infected hundreds of persons with a spontaneous smile.

Apply that to the road. The traveler has even more opportunity to infect others with a contagious, friendly smile and careful, courteous driving. But for many of us it is a long way that we have to go—to grow into good citizenship.

III

There is a third and final avenue we should take to make our highways safer for motorists and pedestrians. We must grow to recognize the power of God to help us. Driving a city street or an open highway, or walking across an avenue or down a country road is made easier and more pleasant for us when we realize we are not alone. God is by our side. C h r i s t said, "Lo, I am with you alway." When we think of Him at our sides we can hardly take chances with ourselves nor can we exploit the other fellow.

My family and I never take a trip without asking God to ride with us to give us two kinds of safety. The first is a physical safety, that we may be spared accidents involving others as well as ourselves and that we may arrive safely at the close of the day at our destination. We also include a prayer for a second kind of safety which is spiritual, that we may be guarded against evils or temptations to do that which is wrong. In other words, we are praying that our light may shine in our driving thoughout the day.

Recently, when two cars filled with young people left the parsonage headed for a week-end retreat in the northern part of the state, the youths gathered first in our home for this type of prayer. The sooner we teach our young people the sacredness of human life the sooner we will be living in a safer world. We are told

that "ninety-five per cent of all automobile accidents are caused by human violations of accepted moral and religious codes." It is astounding to realize what extreme caution and Christian concern could accomplish if given a thorough chance.

It is conceivable that 152 persons might be alive and well today if all laws of traffic had been obeyed last year, but they are dead, and more than 9,000 others have been injured, many permanently, for the same human violations of codes—and these figures tell the story of just one year, and in just one county—Dade!

Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify God." Paul added, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

May it be the resolve of each of us to go forth as lights in the world to obey the laws of the land, to love one another, and to make safe the streets and highways for all others who have as much right to them as do we.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

Edward W. Stimson, Dundee Presbyterian Church, Omaha, Nebraska

"The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'. There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:31.

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." How clear! How seemingly simple! How generally accepted! No teaching of Jesus commands more general agreement than this, even among irreligious people. Why should we include this among the difficult requests of Jesus? Even atheists, even communists, who want to prove that they are just as good or better than Christians, accept the principle and claim that they love their fellow men. Meanwhile we, who often repeat the Law of Love in our worship services, are certainly satisfied with this basic second law. Isn't it perfectly clear that if only all men were taught the way of love for t h e i r neighbors, now that the world has become one small neighborhood, all of our problems would be solved? In my own youth, when the vision of love's possible power first unfolded to my idealism, it seemed just that simple to me. But as the years have passed, and as I have had to learn more about human society, and about the real requirements of love, the more difficult this command has grown. Becoming more realistic, and no longer able to look at morality in simple theoretical idealistic terms I have learned to s h r i n k from the hypocrisy and pretension involved in the mere verbal and abstract acceptance of such a high ideal. There is so much of the superficial pastime of substituting a verbal acceptance of the Law of Love for its performance. Words, words! How much religion evaporates in lovely unrealized words.

Actually there are three tremendous difficulties with this commandment which we should face realistically. They can be phrased in three questions: Who is my neighbor? What is love? How can I become loving of my neighbor?

Facing these questions, we may take Jesus more seriously.

I

The first of these questions—"Who is my neighbor?"—was raised by the lawyer who thought he was putting Jesus to the test. And Jesus, in the context of the Jewish life of that day, with Jewish racial pride and unwillingness to have any dealings with the despised neighboring half-breeds, the Samaritans, told His best-known parable of the Good Samaritan who

late for a speech, was chicken-hearted about blood, and decided the best thing he could do was to send back help from the next town. So rationalizing he sped by on the other side. But a Negro junkman driving along in his dilapidated truck saw the wreck, and pulled off on the berm to investigate. Fortunately he had an old first-aid kit in his truck, and he was able to put a tourniquet on the arm above the fast-bleeding wrist wound. As there were no farmhouses with phones near and no cars came along, he decided to take the man to a hospital in the next town, lifted him into the seat of his dilapidated truck, and drove him as fast as he could to this segregated hospital where he himself would not have been admitted. He even offered to pay something for the man's treatment if necessary. Now which one really believed in loving neighbor as one's self? Who is our neighbor?"

If Jesus were in America in the flesh today and went to Arkansas, he probably would make himself popular by telling his parable in these terms in Little Rock! How differently would he need to tell it to make his point here in Omaha?

The neighbors we must love as we love ourselves are not just the nice people next door. All people whose lives touch ours in any way are God's children and our neighbors, whatever their race or economic situation or national background. Some people need to consider members of the Teamsters' Union t h e i r neighbors; others need help to have a neighborly feeling for business leaders!

II

But now for our second question: What is this love we must have for our neighbors near and far? It is liable to be considered emotionally and to be sentimentalized.

Of course most of us would readily stop to help someone in trouble. The parable is somewhat out of date because in the Western world we have learned it so well, and are so eager proved neighbor to the man who fell among thieves. Yet even this is far enough away from us to gain our too easy acceptance. We might bring it a little closer home by updating the parable to a modern American setting. Let us suppose that it happened on a modern American highway. What happens on our highways? One of our popular solos promises this theme: "Today on the highway I met him." But it is a most unmodern highway, for apparently we are walking along leisurely, have time to see the look on each other's face, and be enraptured by the expression as "he gazed up and smiled on me." Well, I seldom walk on highways. It's too dangerous. I whiz by people in other cars and can't see their faces. And if I came upon Jesus, trudging along the road with no other possessions than His cloak, I'd probably pass Him by.

"A certain man was driving down from Little Rock to Hot Springs, Arkansas, and as he neared the top of a rise in the road he saw that a driver just over the crest had ignored the yellow line and was passing a truck. He took the only possible course and swerved off on the shoulder. The truck driver was over the crest and didn't see it. The culprit had had one for the road, and full of guilty fear that if he was caught his condition would be blamed, he just kept on going. The innocent victim lost control on the narrow shoulder, went into the ditch, sheared off a billboard and landed against a tree, with fractured ribs, a badly bleeding cut wrist and unconscious from head concussion. In other words, he was left half dead, in the manner most common on the American highway.

"A prominent politician happened to be driving by that way, saw the wreck out of the corner of his eye, but he was on the way to a meeting in Hot Springs and he sped by on the other side. A little later a minister drove by, saw the wreck and the man in the front seat, but he was

to help anyone in trouble that an unwieldy crowd gathers whenever anyone is hurt. Love of neighbor and concern for his welfare, dictated by our basic Christian ethical principle of reverence for personality, calls for far more than help for the injured.

In one context Jesus said that on the two commandments of the law of love "hang all of the law and the prophets," and this is easily demonstrated. The prophets' main message was a call for justice in society, and if we love our neighbors as ourselves we shall be active in the cause of social justice to see that all people get equal treatment and equal opportunity.

If we love our neighbors as ourselves, we shall have a motive that guarantees sensitive obedience to all the implications of the second table of the Decalogue:

We cannot steal nor in any way swindle or take unfair advantage of our neighbor in a business way, because we would not want anyone so to treat us.

If we really love our neighbors, we cannot commit adultery or in any way harm or degrade another person's purity, for we would not want our daughter or wife despoiled and degraded.

If we love our neighbor, we cannot tell a tale against him or pass on slanderous gossip, for we would not want such talk about us.

If we love our neighbor, we shall not envy him his success or covet his possessions or position, but congratulate him in his good fortune as we should want to be congratulated.

And certainly, if we love our neighbors, we shall not only not kill them, but shall do everything to prevent endangering their lives and characters. We shall be considerate of our neighbors' safety as well as our own. Obviously I cannot develop and illustrate all of these implications of Christian love in this sermon, but let me say one thing about this last one.

Did you read the article entitled "Driver Had Been Drinking" in the Readers Digest? Here is the latest information about traffic safety. The cold grim figures collected by responsible officials of traffic deaths prove that alcohol is the single largest factor in our motorcar-accident situation, with autopsies performed on drivers killed in accidents showing enough alcohol in the blood to impair driving on the part of 50% to 80% of the drivers!

Also the proof is that the greatest highway menace is not the reeling, babbling drunk, but the typical social drinker of acceptable status who rarely if ever gets crocked but who has had just enough to impair his judgment and driving skill. And how much is that? Seven world medical authorities on the s u b j e c t at a Symposium on Alcohol and Road Traffic at the University of Indiana in 1958 said, "It is the opinion of this committee that a blood alcohol concentration of .05 p e r c e n t will definitely impair the driving ability of some individuals . . . and at a concentration of .10 percent all individuals are definitely impaired."

How much drinking will produce this effect? The typical drinker will approach the danger level of .05 percent on two ounces of whiskey or two bottles of beer, retaining this concentration for at least one hour. At this concentration they have difficulty deciding what to do in emergencies and show a "so what" attitude.

Now I realize there is great difference of opinion about social drinking. I am not judging anyone. Our church does not require an abstinence pledge, and leaves the matter to each individual's enlightened conscience. But it is my duty to enlighten your conscience. So I only ask you to think whether you can ever take more than one drink, or serve people in your home more than one drink, and then have people drive their cars home without jeopardizing their lives and others. Can we really trust ourselves to drink at all when we all drive cars

and don't know when a phone call may call us out into traffic? Can we claim to love our neighbors and still engage in an indulgence that so endangers their lives? The moral implications of really caring for the welfare of other people go farther than we sometimes prefer to think!

III

But this leaves the last question still unanswered: "How can we love our neighbors?" If you think it's easy, try it! Often they are not very lovable. And to tell the truth, we don't all have overflowing love for everybody in our hearts!

How can men be brought to love each other when they don't like anybody very much? Can only the fear of total annihilation be counted on to restrain human animosity?

The Christian answer is that the first Law of Love comes first. It is when the Gospel has changed human nature, and God in Christ has reconciled us to Himself, won us by His forgiving love so that we love Him with all our hearts, that we are ready to open our hearts to love our fellow man. John in the light of Calvary said it long ago: "We love because He first loved us . . . Beloved, if God so loved us we ought also to love one another."

We love our neighbors not because they are lovable, but because God's redeeming love for us makes us see them in terms of what in God's grace they may become. In a measure we all know how Peter felt when Jesus asked him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" When Peter answered, "Lord, you know that I love you," Jesus replied, "Feed my sheep." In other words, "Act in love for my beloved and you will show you love me."

And if you still find it hard to love and serve some people, begin to pray for them in your daily intercessory prayers. As William Law wrote in his "Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life".

"There is nothing that makes us love a man so much as praying for him; and when you can once do this sincerely for any man, you have fitted your soul for the performance of everything that is kind and civil towards him. This will fill your heart with generosity and tenderness, that will give you a better and sweeter behavior than anything that is called fine breeding and good manners. By considering yourself as an advocate with God for your neighbors and acquaintances you would never find it hard to be at peace with them yourself. It would be easy for you to bear with and forgive those for whom you particularly implored the Divine mercy and forgiveness. Such prayers as these amongst neighbors and acquaintances would unite them to one another in the strongest bonds of love and tenderness."

If you find it difficult to obey this command of Jesus, act lovingly toward your neighbors with deeds of kindness, or at least put them on your list for intercessory prayer. Thus sharing the love of God with them you will grow to love them too.

So you will love your neighbor as yourself!

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING from page 2

make up in direct applicability. (Harper & Brothers, 213 pp., $3.50)

Southwestern Sermons, edited by H. C. Brown, Jr., is an unusual anthology in that all thirty-two contributors are members of the faculty of Fort Worth's Southwestern Baptist Seminary and is published to mark the school's fiftieth year. This volume maintains a consistently high homiletical standard and demonstrates that scholars may possess those qualities which identify a pastoral approach to spiritual truth. The book offers a wide exploration of both Biblical and human experience and an enviable

balance in subject matter and approach. (Broadman Press, 212 pp., $3.75)

The Thought of Reinhold Niebuhr by Gordon Harland is an important book for two reasons. First, it concerns a major interpreter, analyzer, clarifier, and stimulator of contemporary religious thought and action. Whatever may be our individual attitudes or reactions to Niebuhrian thinking, we cannot — and ought not to — ignore him. Second, Dr. Harland has b r o u g h t the comprehensive thought of Niebuhr to the confines of a single book which in congenial prose defines and evalutes the achievements of this remarkable theological spokesman. (Oxford University Press, 298 pp., $6)

Music and Worship in the Church by Austin C. Lovelace and William C. Rice provides information of a practical character on all phases of church music and is designed for both specialist and layman. Through these pages any church may find resources for both the enrichment of its musical groups and activities and for the using of more members in the total program of vocal and instrumental praise. (Abingdon Press, 220 pp., $4)

Creative Imagination in Preaching by Webb B. Garrison offers many ideas and suggestions concerning the ideas and illustrations out of which sermons may be fashioned. Thoreau, when asked if there were any arrowheads around Concord, bent over and picked one up. This book shows how a preacher may brighten up his sermons by using materials which are within easy reach. (Fleming H. Revell, 175 pp., $3)

Stewardship in C o n t e m p o r a r y Theology, edited by T. K. Thompson, includes nine articles by distinguished thinkers on the meaning and principles of stewardship according to the Bible, church teachings, and present Christian thought. Few books so admirably undergird and illumine a basic doctrine as does this discerning study of the disciplines and opportunities of stewardship. (Association Press, 252 pp., $3.50)

LESLIE CONRAD, JR.
The Luther League of America
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

GOOD PREACHING IS WHITEFIELDIAN

Two hundred and twenty years ago—in 1740—the Great Awakening registered its greatest year. The minister mostly responsible for the success of the Great Awakening was George Whitefield whose contribution to the preaching profession is incalculable even in 1960.

George Whitefield has been called "the prince of preachers" so often that the description borders on triteness. Nevertheless, a contemporary of Whitefield, wrote: "England has had the honor of producing the greatest men in almost every walk of useful knowledge. At the head of these are: 1st, Archbishop Bradwardine, the prince of divines; 2nd, Milton, the prince of poets; 3rd, Sir Isaac Newton, the prince of philosophers; and 4th, Whitefield, the prince of preachers." The late Charles Silvester Horne observed that Whitefield had no rival in his own age, and no superior in any age.

From generation to generation the consensus has been the same: George Whitefield was a master preacher. But he was more than a mere master of the spoken word. He made master contributions to the preaching profession that have continued to influence its field of activities for more than two hundred years.

I

Whitefield was a "you-preacher." He spoke directly to the persons in his audience. When he had completed a sermon, even the most uninterested listener was forced to admit, "That sermon was aimed at me!" The sermon may not have converted the listener; nevertheless, the listener was aware what the preacher was up to, and at whom the preacher had aimed his homiletical artillery. Had the preacher called the hearer by name, he could not have been more certain that the message was intended for him, and that it would be his own personal peril to ignore it. J. B. Wakeley put it this way: "When Whitefield preached, it did not mean everyone in general and nobody in particular. Each hearer was on the receiving end of the great preacher's deliveries."

Other ministers could—and did—deal with propositions in their sermons, but the Great Awakener was born to deal with persons; by nature, he was forced to preach to persons and plead with persons. There were times, of course, when the great evangelist spoke of other people, places, and things, but he never addressed his sermons to other people, places, or things. He directed his gospel-centered address at everyone within hearing distance of his voice.

As a preacher who understood his audience, Whitefield must be ranked with the greatest of the ages. C. Harold King says, "Rarely has there been a better example of rapport between speaker and audience, between listeners who craved much and a speaker who was superbly equipped to give his listeners what they craved."

II

Had public opinion polls been conducted during the eighteenth century, and had the millions who heard Whitefield's sermons been asked, "Why do you like Mr. Whitefield's preaching?" one of the most common replies would have been, "He preaches extempore." In a day when most sermons were delivered either

from full manuscript or bulky notes, Whitefield dared to employ a manuscriptless, noteless form of delivery.

Whitefield discovered the value of extempore preaching during the first year of his ministry, and used it until he died. The fact that he was not a manuscript preacher—in a day when most ministers were slaves to handwritten scripts—made his sermons all the more inviting to the multitudes who gathered to hear him preach.

The Great Awakener did not preach —or pray—extemporaneously without criticism. His major protagonists, of course, were parish ministers and theological professors who were convinced that only a manuscript could produce good preaching. For example, the professors at Harvard considered extempore preaching to be anathema; to them, such a method of delivery was a lazy preacher's manner that cost him nothing e i t h e r in preparation or presentation. Furthermore, the Harvard professors were pleased to add that extempore preaching was only minutely instructive to the mind, and still less cogent to the reasoning powers.

Whitefield — as usual — had an answer for his critics. He accused them of wishful thinking to call extempore preaching a lazy preacher's manner. "I have generally observed," he replied, "extempore preachers are the most fervent, laborious preachers, and I believe (at least I speak for myself who have tried both ways) that it costs them as much, if not more close and solemn thought, as well as faith and confidence in God, as preaching by notes."

The great preacher's Journals often referred to the absence of extempore preaching in the American Colonies. One of his longer observations was recorded on October 29, 1740, immediately after his successful tour of New England. "I think the ministers preaching almost universally by note, is a mark they have, in a g r e a t measure, lost the old spirit of preaching. Though all are not to be condemned who use notes, yet it is a symptom of the decay of religion, when reading sermons becomes fashionable where extempore preaching did once almost universally prevail. When the spirit of prayer began to be lost, then forms of prayer were invented, and, I believe the same observation will hold g o o d as to preaching."

III

The fearlessness of the preacher was one ideal which George Whitefield esteemed as long as he lived. His writings are saturated with unmistakable views on the subject. The following reference was penned on board ship, as he sailed for America to launch the Great Awakening. It was addressed "To Students of a Dissenting College": "It rejoiced me much to see such dawnings of grace in your souls; only I thought most of you were bowed down too much with servile fear of man; but, as the love of the Creator increases, the fear of the creature will decrease. Unless your hearts are f r e e from worldly hopes and fears, you will never speak boldly, as you ought to speak. The good old Puritans, I believe, never preached better than when in danger of being taken to prison as soon as they finished their sermons; and, I am persuaded, unless you go forth with the same temper, you will never preach with the same demonstration of the Spirit, and of power. Study your hearts as well as your books. Ask yourselves, again and again, whether you would preach for Christ, if you were sure to lay down your lives for so doing."

On Whitefield's first trip across the Atlantic, he was named ship's chaplain. Hardly had they set sail before the chaplain let go with a sermonic broadside that figuratively rocked the ship. The message was entitled "The Eternity of Hell Torments." His congregation was a crew of hardened sailors. Only a preacher of Whitefield's courage would have dared to deliver such a sermon in such a place.

Before the ship docked, its crew had also heard sermons on "The Heinous Sin of Profane Cursing and Swearing" and "The Heinous Sin of Drunkenness"—and with amazing results. All three of these sermons are included in "Whitefield's Works."

But even George Whitefield was human, and failed on at least one occasion to practice the fearlessness that he always preached. Mrs. George Whitefield died on August 9, 1768; and strange as it may seem, George Whitefield preached his wife's funeral sermon five days later. Recalling her spirit of fortitude, he remarked: "Do you remember my preaching in those fields by the old stump of a tree? The multitude was great, and many were disposed to be riotous. At first, I addressed them firmly; but when a desperate gang drew near, with the most ferocious and horried imprecations and menances, my courage began to fail. My wife was then standing behind me, as I stood on the table. I think I hear her now. She pulled my gown, and, looking up, said, 'George, play the man for your God!' My confidence returned. I spoke to the multitude with boldness and affection. They became still, and many were deeply affected."

IV

Whitefield had a bold imagination. It made no difference where he looked, he always seemed to see more, and report what he saw in more picturesque terms than any of his contemporaries. His sermons were greatly bolstered by the results of his ever-working imaginative processes. His illustrations, of course, are the most fruitful — and lasting — evidences of his imagination. His illustrations generally met three requirements:

First, his illustrations are related to the topic and subject material of the sermon. He did not employ an illustration merely to entertain his audience; he never employed an illustration just because "it was a real good story that he could not wait to relate." He used an illustration because it filled a particular need, and fit precisely into his sermonic picture frame.

Second, his illustrations are about people—usually one person at a time. Whitefield was aware that persons like to hear about other persons. Whitefield g a v e them what they wanted, and was a more effective preacher by doing so.

Third, his illustrations are generally "action in the present tense." The personalities in his illustrations speak the language of his day in the present tense. Even when he turned to the past for material, he could bring it into focus by a skillful employment of the present tense. This trait was especially true and helpful when he used illustrations from the Bible. He did not leave the material in the first chapter of Genesis, or in the first century of the Christian Church. To Whitefield the Bible was not only the Book of Life, but the Book alive! He made it live, and he made it lively! There was no place for past-tense dullness or drabness in his illustrations.

V

Jonathan Edwards claimed that a minister must be equipped with two splendid abilities if he intends to make much headway in advancing the kingdom of Christ. One is zeal and the other is resolution. In his book, "Thoughts on the Revival of Religion in New England — 1740," Edwards wrote: "When people see these things apparently in a person, and to a great degree, it awes them, and has a commanding influence upon their minds; it seems to them that they must yield; and naturally fall before them, without standing to contest or dispute the matter; they are conquered as it were by surprise." Edwards was convinced that every great accomplishment in history could be traced to persons who possessed these two qualities. To substantiate his claim, he named three men: Alexander the Great, Oliver Crom-

well, and George Whitefield.

Whitefield deserved the compliment. Zeal and resolution were propelling forces in his ministry. He did not wait for souls to come to him, but he went out searching for souls. In one of his letters to John Wesley from Queen Anne's County, Maryland, he wrote: "If you ask, how it is with me? I answer, 'Happy in Jesus, the Lord my righteousness.' If you ask, what I am doing? I answer, 'Ranging and hunting in the American woods after poor sinners.'"

The Great Awakener did not sit tamely by his fireside, mourning the wickedness of the American colonists. He went forth "to beard the devil in his high places." He attacked sin and wickedness face to face. He hunted up ignorance and vice. He demonstrated that he thoroughly realized the nature of his ministerial office. Like a wise fisherman, he did not wait for the fish to come swimming in his direction, but employed every means known to catch souls. In "The Preacher," John Greenleaf Whittier poetized of Whitefield:

Up and down the world he went,
A John the Baptist crying,—
Repent!

During his thirty-four year ministry, he preached eighteen thousand sermons, according to the entries in the memorandum book that he always carried with him. He was only fifty-five years of age when he died. Not long before the end, when urged by friends to preach less often and take fewer chances with his health, he replied, "I had rather wear out than rust out!" His wish was granted.

The following lines from the pen of an unidentified verse writer are indicative of the high esteem in which the royal preacher was held:

But when the flaming Chariots come,
And shining Guards attend the Prophet home,
Amidst a thousand weeping Eyes,
Send an Elisha down a Soul of equal Size,
Or burn a worthless World, & take us to the Skies.

VI

In his sermon, "God a Believer's Glory," Whitefield stated: "I don't like those men that leave their writings to be published after their death; I love to see men bold in their writings; I like an honest man that will put out his writings while alive, that he may see what men can say against him, and then answer them; but it is mere cowardice to leave it to the world to answer for it, to set a cavelling after they are got into the grave."

This was one policy that Whitefield followed throughout his life. On July 22, 1737, just about a year after he was ordained, Whitefield placed the following advertisement in the "Weekly Miscellany": "Speedily will be published (price six pence, or two guineas per hundred, to those who give them away), The Nature and Necessity of our Birth in Christ Jesus, in order to Salvation—a Sermon preached in the Church of St. Mary's Redcliffe, in Bristol, by George Whitefield, A.B., of Pembroke College, Oxford. Published at the request of several of the hearers."

As long as he lived—and for many years thereafter — printers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean profited financially from the sale of Whitefield's sermons, letters, dissertations, and refutations. The great evangelist apparently never turned down a printer who asked for permission to publish his materials. On most occasions, he gladly presented a copy of the desired materials to any printer who asked for it; he preferred that the public be sold the approved version of his works. Less than two weeks after Whitefield arrived in Philadelphia on his first trip in 1739, the following notice appeared in the "Pennsylvania Gazette," the newspaper published by Benjamin Franklin:

> The Rev. George Whitefield having given me copies of his Journals and Sermons, with leave to print the same, I propose to publish them with all expedition, if I find sufficient encouragement. The Sermons will make two volumes, and the Journals two more, which will be delivered to subscribers at two shillings for each volume, bound. Those, therefore, who are inclined to encourage this work, are desired speedily to send in their names to me, that I may take measures accordingly.

Whitefield became so busy evangelizing that he found little opportunity to write out his extempore sermons. The longest periods of leisure were during his thirteen voyages across the Atlantic, and he made the most of these time consuming ocean crossings. He usually put down in writing what he considered to have been the best of his most recently preached extempore sermons. He would turn them over to a printer shortly after disembarking.

The contribution of Whitefield's printed sermons is incalculable. Printers in almost every locale assisted indirectly in promoting the Great Awakening by marketing his sermons and other writings. Tens of thousands of copies were sold. They were best sellers in the American Colonies and remained favorite reading material until the early part of the nineteenth century.

WORTH QUOTING

from page 2

To be alive at all involves some risk. Harold Macmillan

* * *

In this world a terrible game is always being played between light and darkness, between good and evil, between Christ and anti-Christ. A true man's place is not in the stands merely criticizing or cheering the players, but on the field battling toward the goal. G. T. Bellhouse

* * *

Happiness is not in our circumstances but in ourselves. It is not something we see, like a rainbow, or feel like the heat of a fire. Happiness is something we are.

* * *

When we begin to know not only what men do but why they do it, we stand on the threshold of truth.

Union Signal

* * *

The only bad part of being a good sport is that you have to lose to prove it. Walter Winchell

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A Man's Prayer: Teach me that 60 minutes make an hour, 16 ounces a pound, and 100 cents a dollar. Help me to live so that I can lie down at night with a clear conscience and unhaunted by the faces of those to whom I may have brought pain. Grant that I may earn my meal ticket on the square, and in earning it I may do unto others as I would have them do unto me. Deafen me to the tingle of tainted money. Blind me to the faults of other fellows and reveal to me my own. Guide me so that each night when I look across the table at my wife, who has been a blessing to me, I will have nothing to conceal. Keep me young enough to laugh with little children and sympathetic so as to be considerate of old age. And comes the day of darkening shades make the ceremony short and the epitaph simple: "Here lies a man."

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It is not so much our friends' help that helps as the confidence of their help. Epicurus

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Loyalty cannot be coerced or compelled, it has to be won.

A. Whitney Griswold

To live a blameless life is not enough. It must be a life that will bring Christ to one's fellow men. There is no gainsaying that consistent Christian Living is a powerful testimony, but the silent witness of a redeemed life must be supported by the active witness of the redeeming deed if we are to confront our sophisticated . . . cynical generation with Christ. Unconscious influence, important though it may be, is too often a refuge from demands of a more dynamic form of witness.

Willis Lamott

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As we dig into some of the immediate problems of human need, better housing, better health, a little more fun for the kids and little more hope for their parents, we break through into even deeper human problems. It is then that the message of the Gospel has its real relevance, then that it must speak to these men and women, who like the rest of us, are alienated from God and full of antagonism toward their fellow men.

Archie Hargraves

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The alternative before all church members may be stated as follows: to be fruit bearers, or to be fiddlers; to be Christian soldiers, or to be slackers; to be attendants, or to be absentees; to be givers, or to be grabbers; to be Christian salt, or to be worldly sediment; to be light, or to be a load; to be a power, or to be a problem; to be supporters, or to be spongers; to be witnesses, or to be weights; to be missionaries, or to be mummies.

Harry H. McLeod

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If we would win the esteem of our fellow men we must deserve it —by our kindliness, our thoughtfulness, our willingness to overlook faults in others as we would have them overlook our own. When we have learned this, we can face the whole world unafraid. This is living.

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So much of our evangelism is wading around in the same pool instead of launching out into the deep.

Herman N. Morse

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Seven deadly sins are:
Policies without principles.
Wealth without work.
Pleasure without conscience.
Knowledge without character.
Commerce and industry without morality.
Science without humanity.
Worship without sacrifice.

Frederick Lewis Donaldson

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It is right to be contented with what we have; never with what we are.

J. Mackintosh

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There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval.

George Santayana

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To live to oneself only is never to live at all.

Sir Wilfred Grenfell